It was some time since communal representation in the State service had begun to be claimed. The Nairs themselves advocated it in the Assembly and they had already reaped the consequences. A perusal of the *Civil List* would show how many of the higher appointments were held by Nairs. The policy of the Government in the matter of distribution of official appointments was antogonistic to the community. There was a strong belief among the members of the community that the Government wanted to reduce the strength of the Nairs in the service and to exclude them from responsible posts. That it was no mistake or misunderstanding would be clear on close examination to any one. The continuance of the policy was not conducive to a peaceful administration. When new appointments were created or when vacancies arose, communities which had a support elsewhere and whose claims were put forward by the newspapers got preference. Usually, the Senior Dewan Peishkar was appointed as the Chief Secretary. This practice was deviated from in favour of a person who had in no way any claim to it on the ground of university qualifications or administrative efficiency. In preference to the Senior Judge of the High Court, a senior professor was appointed Principal of the Law College. It was true that he deserved the place on account of his legal acumen and high intellectual ability. But the Member asked if the Travancore Service Regulation would not bind him. These matters should form the subject of consideration for the Government and they should adopt an equitable policy.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Padmanabha Pillai, you have said many things very airily, I might almost say, recklessly. Perhaps, you would be able to speak in a much more sober way if I could only find it within my power to put you into my place for just one week. Unfortunately, or fortunately, that is not possible, and even if it were possible, I think it would be too dangerous an experiment to try.

177. Mahomedans and the Public Service.

MR. M. A. NAVURKANI ROWTHER (*Member, Nominated*) said that the Mahomedans merited consideration on the ground of their strength in numbers and their contribution to the revenues of the State. They were behind none in loyalty to the Ruling Family; His Highness the late Maha Raja Sri Mulam Tirunal had expressed it in his reply to the welcome address presented by the Mahomedans of Alleppey. The Dewans also received considerable support from them in carrying on the administration of the country and the Member assured their hearty co-operation with the present administration also.

On account of their backwardness in education they had not been able to get a fair representation in the public service. But in recent times there had been an awakening in the community in the matter of its education, and the Member hoped that during the present regime they would have their due share in the service of the State. In these days when communal representation in the service had become a problem, the Mahomedan community would be entitled to 7 per cent. of the appointments in the service. What the community wanted was no special consideration at the hands of the Government, but their just share in the administration. If this principle was to be accepted, every qualified member of the community would be entitled to an appointment suitable to his educational attainments. But it would not be practicable to provide all of them at once. What was therefore to be done was that, among applicants for a post with equal qualifications, the Mahomedan candidate should have preference. The orders and circulars issued by the Government in the matter did not produce any good. They should be enforced. The avowed policy of the Government was to encourage the Mahomedans; but its working had however not that effect, and that materially affected the educational progress of the community. The Government should therefore give special attention to this matter and appoint the Mahomedan youths who have passed the B. L. degree examination to suitable posts in the service without any more delay. Those who were already in service should also be given suitable promotions. There were some in the Huzur Office, the Account Office and the High Court; but they were not yet confirmed in the posts to which they had been appointed. They should be confirmed and given promotions at the earliest opportunity. A Mahomedan who had

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put in a service of fifteen years and had been for the past ten years a draftsman was recently disbanded from the service with the recent reform of the Revenue Department. At least in the next vacancy, he should be posted as a Revenue Supervisor.

The principle of seniorty among acting men adopted in the matter of initial appointments in the Secretariat was a source of hardship to the Mahomedans. The Mahomedans should be given priority over others if he had been in the Secretariat even for a day.

The rule debarring the entertainment of persons over twenty-five years of age in the service should be relaxed so far as the Mahomedans were concerned, as they were backward in point of education. Mahomedan youths who passed out successfully in the Vernacular School Leaving Certificate Examination should be entertained in the Education and other departments.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Navurkani Rowther, one point of your speech which seems to call for special attention is your request that the longstanding 25 year age rule should be abrogated in favour of Mahomedans. Frankly, I tell you I do not believe that a man who is unable to pass his B. A. degree examination before 25 is any good at all. It either means that he is dull intellectually or lazy or an invalid. That rule therefore had better stand. It would best ensure your best men to come on quickly.

178. Ezhavas and the Public Service.

MR. MULUR S. PADMANABHA PANIKKAR *(Member, Nominated)* said that the Government should see that the Ezhavas were not denied their rights in the matter of public service. They were not properly represented in the ranks of the Peishkars, Judges, Sirkar Vakils, Munsiffs, Tahsildars, Magistrates, etc. The Ezhava community was grieved to find that the Government were not kind enough to appoint an Ezhava District Judge as a Peishkar, or a High Court Vakil of ten years' standing as a Sirkar Vakil or Judge, or another clever man as a Munsiff, or a Tahsildar as an Assistant Secretary to Government or an Inspector of Police or a clerk in the Huzur Office with B. L. degree as Magistrate. There was only one Ezhava as Stationary Magistrate. He had not yet been confirmed. Even though there were three or four Ezhavas with English university qualifications, they had not received any encouragement from the Government. There were several boys and girls in the community who had passed the School Leaving Certificate Examination, Registration and other tests, Vidvan Examination, etc., but could not get employment in any department, and as the departmental heads did not consider their claims, they were now past twenty five years of age. In such cases, the Government should kindly relax the twenty-five year age limit.

At the session of the Assembly held in 1099 also, he had represented these matters. Nothing came out of any of those representations and therefore he said he had to repeat them at the current session also. Each application received by the Government should be forwarded to the heads of departments concerned with the necessary advice in regard to the action to be taken on it.

From time immemorial, the Ezhavas had acquired exceptional proficiency in the Ayurveda system of medicine, and yet they were not represented in the Department of Ayurveda. This omission should be made good.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Padmanabha Panikkar, whatever might have been the position years ago, it is entirely different to-day. To-day, the Ezhavas are held in as much respect and honour as what used to be considered peculiar to the higher castes in olden days. To-day, every community in Travancore is held to be in the same position.

In the matter of the twenty-five year rule, although that has been and will now with redoubled force be the general rule, the Government will always be prepared to consider exceptional cases for exceptional treatment.

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